



Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

July 24th , Tone 5, Matt. 9:1-8

The Man Healed of Palsy

Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 5

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead, by His glorious Resurrection.

Troparion for Annunciation, Tone 4

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery! the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Re-joice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you.

Kontakion of Annunciation, Tone 8

O Victorious Leader of triumphant hosts! We, your servants delivered from evil, sing our grateful thanks to you, O Theotokos! As you possess invincible might set us free from every calamity so that we may sing: Re-joice, O Unwedded Bride!

The gospel for the sixth Sunday after Pentecost (Matt. 9:1-8) describes Jesus healing the man sick of the palsy. It throws light on the relationship between the forgiveness of sins — “Son...thy sins be forgiven thee” — and physical healing — “Arise, take up thy bed”. Jesus, who is able to heal the man’s palsy therefore also has, despite the indignation of the scribes, the right to forgive sins. The episode has already been read as the gospel for the second Sunday of Lent (Mk. 2:1-12)..

We continue the reading from the epistle to the (Romans 12:6-14). St. Paul, after his long discourse on the nature of faith and justification, goes on to practical questions. All of us, he says, have ‘gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us’. One is called to prophesy, another to teach, another to preach, another to administer. These different ministries must be exercised in a spirit of faith and loyalty to the particular grace received. We see that Paul does not limit the individual gifts to the high functions we have just listed: he considers that giving alms and works of mercy are also ministries which correspond to a special grace. ‘He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity . . . he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.’

These last two points, simplicity in almsgiving, and cheerfulness in works of mercy deserve to be meditated on seriously by everyone. From this, Paul goes on to the duties that are common to all: love, zeal, hope, patience, perseverance in prayer, hospitality. He concludes by advising us to bless, and not to curse, our persecutors.

This epistle, besides the general duties to which it calls us, raises the question of our own special ‘gift’ or ‘ministry’. I must examine before God what my own particular vocation is, what gift I have received to share with others. But I can also bear in mind that every action which immediate circumstances necessitate, and every situation in which I am placed by the divine will at any moment, constitutes in itself a sort of temporary vocation and ministry. There is a special grace corresponding to each minute of my life, if that minute is offered to God. No detail of life is without importance or without a blessing, as long as one knows how to see, in that detail, the reflection of a divine gift calling, on man’s part, for a loving and trustful response.

(Taken from *The Year of Grace of the Lord*, by a Monk of the Eastern Church)

From the Lives of the Saints... THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYR CHRISTINA

Christina was born in the city of Tyre. She was the daughter of Urban, the imperial deputy, an idol-worshipper. The reason her parents gave her the name of Christina is unknown, but it contained within itself the mystery of her future following of Christ.

Announcements and Activities

Saturday Great Vespers— 5:30 PM.

Divine Liturgy— Sunday, at 10AM.

Mortgage Drive— Last year we met our pledge goal of 20K and church matching funds of 20K. Our goal was to do the mortgage reduction for 2 consecutive years and see if we can't retire the mortgage in 2023. Let's throw the Mortgage Reduction Red Thermometer on the wall in the Hall over the top and be able to say that this facility is totally in possession of God and His people. We will conclude this particular drive on September 1st. So far, we've only raised about 5K. It will be very blessed for each of us to search our hearts for the extra that we can give toward this phenomenal goal. What a glory it will be to burn the mortgage, and what a credit to your stewardship.

Coffee Hours— This week's Coffee Hour is being sponsored by Kerrie and Aaron. Next week's Coffee Hour will be our monthly pot-luck.

Pray for... Hierarch Nikolai (Soraich)— battling cancer. Samir's friend, **Johnny**, who has been improving in the battle to save his sight. **Brian**, Sunday's brother. **George and Alex**, health problems. **All those who have lost their lives or are suffering as a result of the current Pandemic**. **Archimandrite Alexander** — Fr. Lawrence's long-time father confessor, who reposed. **Our Vladyka Benjamin**— battling on-set parkinsons. **Tsige Roman and Abraham** — I know we are always mindful of Tsige, but please continue to pray for the work and for Ethiopia, torn by civil war, with all the problems that go with a regional terror. **Reposed Jonathan T. George and Alesis**, Brother and Daughter of Peter and Irene S. **Matushka Ioanna R. reposed. Matushka Priscilla, ill. Anya J**— a longtime friend of the parish who is ill. **Stephen F.**— battling back pain. **John F.**— battling cancer. **Archpriest Anthony**— battling cancer. **Julie**— sister of Kathy M., battling health problems. **Rhoda's requests for Douglas and Kayana. Reposed Constance**— the mother of Andrew F. **Will**— reposed, Michael T.'s brother-in-law. **Reposed Vadim. Christian**— undergoing some medical testing. The reposed— **Novice Nonna, Robbie**— cancer. **Raphael**, cancer. Child **Aidan** — seizures. Child **Henry. Robbie** the cousin of Brian R., who reposed after a battle with cancer. **Louis Joseph M.**, is now home and, thank God, ready to come to church again. **Victor T. reposed on Holy Saturday. Christine**—reposed on Holy Saturday. **Holli**— Reposed. **Reposed Dn. George. Jobie**, cancer. **Darryl and Laura Beth. Diane F.**— short-term illness. **Repose: Stavrophore Elizabeth, of Kazan Skete . Pastor Brad**, a friend of Kirk's who is going through a difficult time. **Sarah**, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather, health issues.

Until the age of eleven she knew nothing of Christ. When she reached that age, her father made her live in the top of a high tower, in order to protect her from the world, because of her extraordinary beauty. He planned to have her live there until she reached full maturity. All the comforts of life were afforded her--slaves to serve her, and gold and silver idols that she might offer sacrifices to them daily. However, the soul of young Christina was saddened in this isolated, idolatrous environment. Looking out the window each day at the sun and all the beauty of the world, and again at night at the wondrous constellations of shining stars,

Christina came to a firm belief in the One Living God through her own natural understanding. The merciful God, seeing her longing for the truth, sent His angel to trace the sign of the Cross upon Christina. The angel called her the bride of Christ, and instructed her fully in the knowledge of divine things. Then Christina smashed all the idols in her quarters, thus provoking wild fury in her father. He brought her to trial, and had her tortured. Then he had her thrown into prison, intending to have her beheaded the next day. That night Urban, who had been in full health, spewed forth his soul and went to the grave before his daughter. After this, two imperial deputies, Dion and Julian, continued to torture this holy virgin. Christina's courageous endurance and the miracles she worked by the power of God converted many pagans of Tyre to Christianity.

During the torturing of Christina, Dion suddenly fell dead in the midst of the people. Dion's successor, Julian, severed Christina's breasts and tongue. The martyr threw her severed tongue into Julian's face, and he was instantly blinded. Finally, her suffering for Christ ended beneath the sharp sword, but her life continues in the Immortal Kingdom of the angels. St. Christina suffered honorably in the third century.

THE VENERABLE POLYCARP, ABBOT OF THE MONASTERY OF THE CAVES IN KIEV

Polycarp possessed "love toward God and neighbor, joy from an untainted conscience, peace from victory over all the passions, patience in time of temptation and misfortune, goodness in submission to all, benevolence toward the poor, undoubting faith in fulfilling the commandments, truth in fulfilling his vows, meekness in freedom from anger, abstinence and so forth." So well did he govern the Kiev Caves Lavra that, after his death, a worthy successor among the monks could not be found (for those who were worthy did not want to accept the rank of abbot out of humility), so that the brethren were compelled to take Basil, a secular priest, as their abbot. St. Polycarp reposed in the Lord in the year 1182 A.D.

Taken from *The Year of Grace of the Lord* by A Monk of the Eastern Church

"There do not exist many or few, nor small or great problems. The only problem is the absence of Christ from our lives" (From the life and teachings of Elder Epiphanius Theodoropoulos)